

TEXAS COMMISSION ON ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY

PTR PROGRAM STAFF GUIDANCE

Guidance Title: Restriction on the Use of Bentonite in Public Water Supply Wells

Rule Affected: 30 *Texas Administrative Code* (TAC) Section 290.41(c)(3)(C)

A risk of water source contamination is associated with improper use of bentonite mixtures in unsaturated or semisaturated zones where the moisture content of the mixture fluctuates. Under such conditions, the bentonite mixture may crack, or otherwise degrade, and not provide an adequate barrier to contaminants. Therefore, bentonite may be used only in the following application:

A bentonite plug may be used in a water saturated zone¹ to seal the annular space above the packer. The plug may not exceed five feet in height and the entire plug shall be below the water table at all times. The placement of the plug and the grout seal shall be a continuous operation to minimize the possibility of voids in the seal.

¹Water Saturated Zone – a water saturated zone is a layer below the water table where the interstices are completely filled with water at all times.

4/7/14
Effective Date

Expiration Date

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If no formal expiration date has been established for this staff guidance, it will remain in effect until superseded or canceled.